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# UNITED STATES AND SOVIET DISMANTLEMENT AND STRATEGIC FORCE PROJECTIONS

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## COMMUNICATION

FROM

## THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

TRANSMITTING

A REPORT CONTAINING PROJECTIONS AND COMPARISONS OF U.S. AND SOVIET STRATEGIC FORCE DISMANTLEMENTS IN TERMS OF ADHERENCE TO EXISTING ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS, PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 99-145, SEC. 1001(b) (99 STAT. 705).

AUGUST 5, 1986.—Referred jointly to the Committee on Armed Services and Foreign Affairs, and ordered to be printed

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THE WHITE HOUSE,
*Washington, August 5, 1986.*

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Enclosed is an unclassified version of a classified report which I provided on June 19 in response to related Congressional requests, including a request for projections and comparisons of U.S. and Soviet strategic force dismantlements, inventories, etc., in terms of adherence to existing arms control agreements.

As I noted in my letter of June 19 transmitting the classified report, it is clear that SALT II and I codified a very major arms buildup including a quadrupling of Soviet strategic weapons (warheads and bombs) since SALT I was signed in 1972 and near doubling of Soviet ballistic missile warheads from about 5,000 to more than 9,000 since SALT II was signed in 1979.

The report further found that the SALT I and II agreements, even if fully complied with, would not prevent a very substantial further expansion of Soviet capabilities. We believe that, absent SALT II, the Soviets would not necessarily expand their forces significantly beyond the increases already projected *with* SALT II since the Soviet forces are very large and would appear, in our judgment, more than enough to meet reasonable military requirements.

In my letter of June 19, I noted that in view of the adverse implications of Soviet noncompliance for our security and for the arms control process, I had determined on May 27 that, in the future, the United States must base decisions regarding its strategic force structure on the nature and magnitude of the threat posed by Soviet strategic forces, and not on standards contained in the SALT structure which has been undermined by Soviet noncompliance, and especially in a flawed SALT II treaty which was never ratified, would have expired if it had been ratified, and has been violated by the Soviet Union.

I have also noted that the full implementation of the Strategic Modernization Program is critical both to meeting our future national security needs and to appropriately responding to Soviet noncompliance. However, we will exercise utmost restraint. As we modernize, we will continue to retire older forces as national security requirements permit. We do not anticipate any appreciable growth in the size of U.S. strategic forces. Assuming no significant change in the threat, we will not deploy more strategic nuclear delivery vehicles or more strategic ballistic missile warheads than does the Soviet Union.

I want again to emphasize that no policy of interim restraint is a substitute for an agreement on deep and equitable reductions in offensive nuclear arms, provided that we can be confident of Soviet compliance with it. Achieving such reductions continues to receive my highest priority. This is the most direct path to achieving greater stability and a safer world.

Sincerely,

RONALD REAGAN.

The HONORABLE THOMAS P. O'NEILL, Jr.,
*Speaker of the House of Representatives,*
*Washington, DC.*

# REPORT TO THE CONGRESS
# ON
# US INTERIM RESTRAINT POLICY AND ON REPRESENTATIVE SOVIET AND US FORCES WITH AND WITHOUT SALT I AND II

July 18, 1986

(3)

# REPORT TO THE CONGRESS ON REPRESENTATIVE SOVIET AND US DISMANTLEMENT AND STRATEGIC FORCE PROJECTIONS WITH AND WITHOUT SALT I AND II

## I -- INTRODUCTION - US INTERIM RESTRAINT POLICY AND US RESPONSES TO SOVIET NONCOMPLIANCE

This report is an unclassified version of a report forwarded to the Congress on June 19, 1986, in response to the requirements of the FY 1986 Department of Defense Authorization Act (Title X, Section 1001 (b)) for a report on certain data and assessments related to United States and Soviet strategic offensive forces and on possible Soviet political, military, and negotiating responses to changes in the US policy of interim restraint. As requested by this legislation, the report covers a 5-year period. It is provided in conjunction with material including the President's Statement of May 27 and a White House Fact Sheet of the same date on US Interim Restraint Policy: Responding to Soviet Arms Control Violations.

The US policy of Interim Restraint as first announced by the President in 1982 has been that, in spite of the flaws inherent in the SALT agreements and in an effort to foster an atmosphere of mutual restraint conducive to serious negotiations on arms reductions, the United States would not undercut the expired SALT I Interim Offensive Agreement of 1972 or the unratified SALT II Treaty of 1979 so long as the Soviet Union exercised equal restraint.

In three detailed Administration reports to the Congress on Soviet noncompliance, and through diplomatic channels including the US-Soviet Standing Consultative Commission, the President has consistently made clear that this US policy required Soviet reciprocity and that it must not adversely affect our national security interests in the face of the continuing Soviet military buildup and uncorrected Soviet noncompliance.

In accordance with US interim restraint policy and our efforts to build a framework of truly mutual restraint, the United States has not taken any actions that would undercut existing agreements. We have continued scrupulously to live within all arms control agreements, including the SALT I and II strategic arms agreements. Unfortunately, while the US has been attempting to hold to the structure of SALT through our policy of interim restraint, the Soviet Union has undercut the very foundation of that structure through its continued violations.

In June of 1985, the President went the extra mile. He decided to dismantle a US POSEIDON submarine, in order to give the Soviet Union adequate time to correct its noncompliance, reverse its unwarranted military buildup, and seriously pursue equitable and verifiable arms reduction agreements in the Geneva negotiations.

Regrettably, the Soviet Union has so far failed to move constructively in these three areas.

In spite of our expressed concerns and our diplomatic efforts for corrective Soviet actions, the Soviet Union has not corrected its noncompliance. Concerning SALT II, the President's most recent report, of December 23, 1985, to the Congress cited as Soviet violations: (1) the development of the SS-25 missile, a prohibited second new type of ICBM; (2) extensive encryption of telemetry on ICBM missile flight tests, which impedes verification; (3) concealment of the association between the SS-25 missile and its launcher during testing; and (4) exceeding the SALT II numerical cap of 2,504 Strategic Nuclear Delivery Vehicles (SNDVs). In addition, the President's report cited three areas of ambiguous Soviet behavior as involving possible violations or other problems with regard to SALT II: (1) SS-16 ICBM activity, (2) the BACKFIRE bomber's intercontinental operating capability, and (3) the BACKFIRE bomber's production rate. Concerning SALT I, the President's report cited a violation in the Soviet use of former SS-7 ICBM facilities in support of the deployment and operation of the SS-25 mobile ICBMs. These SALT II and SALT I violations and other ambiguous situations involving these treaties remain matters of serious concern, as does Soviet violation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty of 1972 and of other major arms control agreements.

The Administration has now concluded a comprehensive review, and extensive consultations with our Allies and friends abroad and with members of the Congress, on the continuing Soviet pattern of noncompliance, the Soviet strategic arms buildup and the lack of progress by the Soviets at the Geneva negotiations. The President announced on May 27 that in the future, the United States would base decisions regarding its strategic force structure on the nature and magnitude of the threat posed by Soviet strategic forces, not on standards contained in the flawed SALT structure, which has been seriously undermined by Soviet noncompliance.

In his May 27 announcement on US interim restraint policy and on the US response to continued Soviet noncompliance, the President pointed out the inappropriateness of continuing with the SALT II agreement. SALT II codified continuing major arms buildups. It was considered by a broad range of critics, including the Senate Armed Services Committee, to be unequal and unverifiable in important provisions. It was never ratified by the US Senate, and was clearly headed for defeat before the President's predecessor asked the Senate not to act on it. With SALT II the Soviets have nearly doubled their strategic ballistic missile warheads from about 5,000 to 9,000 and with SALT II they could legally undertake a further significant increase. Even if SALT II had been ratified, it would have expired on December 31, 1985.

Finally, continued Soviet violations have seriously undercut the agreement for several years in spite of repeated US requests for

corrective Soviet action. (Concerning SALT I, this agreement expired in 1977, and since it was signed in 1972, the Soviet Union has quadrupled the number of its strategic nuclear warheads. As for the US, even if we did not retire older systems, the US would, under current plans, remain in technical observance of the SALT I numerical limits until mid-1989.)

The President made clear in his May 27 announcement that the US would continue to exercise utmost restraint in the future, seeking to meet US strategic needs, given the Soviet buildup, by means that minimize incentives for continuing Soviet offensive force growth. The President stated that as we modernize, we will continue to retire older forces as our national security requirements permit, and that we do not anticipate any appreciable numerical growth in US strategic forces. He also indicated that, assuming no significant change in the threat we face as we implement the Strategic Modernization Program, the United States will not deploy more strategic nuclear delivery vehicles or more strategic ballistic missile warheads than does the Soviet Union.

The President also noted that, as a result of his decision to dismantle two older POSEIDON submarines, the United States will remain technically in observance of the terms of the SALT II Treaty for some months. He continues to hope that the Soviet Union will use this additional time to take the constructive steps necessary to alter the current situation. Should they do so, the President has stated that this would be taken into account.

Needless to say, the most essential near-term response to Soviet noncompliance remains the implementation of our full Strategic Modernization Program, to underwrite deterrence today, and the continued pursuit of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) research program, to see if it is possible to provide a safer and more stable basis for our future security and that of our Allies. The Strategic Modernization Program, including the deployment of the second 50 PEACEKEEPER missiles, is the foundation for all future US offensive force options. It provides a solid basis that can and will be adjusted over time to respond most efficiently to continued Soviet noncompliance. The SDI program represents our best hope for a future in which our security can rest on the increasing contribution of defensive systems that threaten no one.

In his May 27 Statement, the President emphasized that no policy of interim restraint is a substitute for an agreement on deep and equitable reductions in offensive nuclear arms, provided that we can be confident of Soviet compliance with it. Achieving such reductions has received, and will continue to receive, his highest priority. We hope the Soviet Union will act to give substance to the agreement reached by the President and General Secretary Gorbachev at the summit meeting last November to achieve early progress in the Geneva negotiations. It was agreed

to focus, in particular, on areas where there is common ground, including the principle of 50 percent reductions, appropriately applied, in the strategic nuclear arms of both countries, as well as an interim agreement on Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces. If the Soviet Union carries out this agreement, we can move now to achieve greater stability and a safer world.

The classified report transmitted to the Congress on June 19 provided a comparison of representative US and Soviet strategic weapons dismantlement that would be required over the next five years if both countries were actually to observe all of the quantitative limits of the SALT I and SALT II agreements. It then presented representative projections of the strategic offensive forces of the two sides assuming that the SALT I and SALT II limits no longer apply. Finally, it provided an assessment of possible Soviet political and negotiating responses, insofar as these are understood and anticipated at present. For security reasons, the present, unclassified version provides the information concerning US and Soviet forces in substantially abbreviated form.

At the outset, it must be noted that there are important uncertainties in the assessments presented herein. With respect to the data on Soviet forces, the projections represent broad trends -- based on both evidence and assumptions -- and are not intended to be precise forecasts. On the basis of US experience, it is unlikely that Soviet strategic forces five years from now will be identical (or necessarily even extremely close) to these force projections. Nevertheless, we believe that Soviet strategic forces in the next three to five years can be reasonably characterized, based on evidence of ongoing programs that would be difficult to alter radically in this timeframe.

By contrast, the size and complexion of future US strategic forces are relatively easier for the Soviets to determine. We must contend with potential <u>increases</u> in Soviet strategic programs and capabilities. However, the principal source of uncertainty for Soviet planners about the scope and size of future US strategic programs is, in all likelihood, the extent to which future US programs may be <u>reduced</u> by Congressional or Executive Branch action.

The data presented here assume <u>full</u> implementation of the Administration's Strategic Modernization Program. It is absolutely essential that we maintain full support for these programs. To fail to do so would be the worst response to Soviet noncompliance. It would immediately and seriously undercut our negotiators in Geneva by removing the leverage that they must have to negotiate equitable reductions in both US and Soviet forces. It would send precisely the wrong signal to the leadership of the Soviet Union about the seriousness of our resolve concerning their noncompliance. And, it would significantly increase the risk to our security for years to come. Therefore, our highest priority must remain the full implementation of these programs.

## II -- PROJECTED SOVIET AND US DISMANTLEMENTS

This section of the report provides representative projections on dismantling that would result if SALT limitations were extended. They should be considered to be approximations, and would be subject to alteration by policy decisions or programmatic adjustments by either side. It should be pointed out that, as documented in the President's December 23, 1985 report to the Congress on Soviet Noncompliance with Arms Control Agreements, the Soviet Union's SALT-accountable strategic nuclear delivery vehicle level is above the SALT II cap of 2,504, in violation of the Soviets' political commitment not to undercut the Treaty.

### Representative Soviet Dismantlements

The Soviet Union has several programs underway to introduce new strategic delivery systems that would necessitate dismantling of older systems if the Soviets were to restrict their overall force to SALT levels. Under a representative projection of such programs, consistent with SALT limits over the next five years the Soviets would deploy significant numbers of new delivery vehicles, including SS-25 and SS-X-24 ICBMs, TYPHOON- and DELTA-type SSBNs, and BACKFIRE bombers and ALCM carriers.

If SALT I and II limits were to be complied with, these actions would necessitate dismantling some older systems in the Soviet inventory, as well as some more modern systems. The older systems include SS-11 and SS-13 ICBMs, SS-N-6 SLBMs on Y-class SSBNs, and BISON and BEAR aircraft. Because the Soviets already are very close to the SALT II sublimit of 820 MIRVed ICBM launchers, deployment of the MIRVed SS-X-24 would require dismantling of existing MIRVed ICBMs -- most likely SS-17s and possibly some SS-19s -- to stay within the ceiling. Similarly, with the continued deployment of SS-N-20 and SS-N-23 SLBMs, their total of MIRVed missile launchers would exceed the ceiling of 1,200 in a year or two; then they would need to dismantle more MIRVed ICBMs or some SS-N-18 launchers on relatively new D-III-class SSBNs to continue observing the cumulative sublimit of 1,200 MIRVed ICBM and SLBM launchers. They have, for some time, been at the limit of 62 modern SSBNs established by SALT I; thus deployment of new SSBNs would require continued dismantling of older submarines.

The dismantlements that would derive from these actions probably would total over the next five years slightly more than 600 strategic nuclear delivery vehicles (SNDVs), with some 1,000 to 1,200 associated ballistic missile warheads. (The SNDV figure also includes heavy bombers judged to have a capacity for some 300 nuclear weapons.) Some dismantling of older systems would occur eventually in any case, with or without SALT limits.

These projected dismantling actions do not take into account the Soviet potential for additional cheating, while nominally observing SALT numerical limits. This might be intended to avoid compensatory dismantlement of other ICBMs, including MIRVed ICBMs.

Representative US Dismantlements

With respect to US programs and dismantlements, full implementation of the Strategic Modernization Program would require continued dismantlements under SALT of US older strategic program systems, most of which are nearing the end of their useful life based on both military and economic considerations.

## PROJECTED SOVIET AND US STRATEGIC FORCES

Projected Soviet Forces

In projecting Soviet strategic offensive force deployments, assuming SALT limits no longer apply, the caveats discussed above regarding assumptions and uncertainties underlying such projections are relevant.

To place these figures in historical perspective, since 1972 when SALT I was signed, there has been a four-fold increase in the number of Soviet strategic nuclear warheads (missile warheads and bombs) and nearly a doubling of Soviet ballistic missile throw-weight. Indeed, since the signing of SALT II in 1979, the number of Soviet strategic ballistic missile warheads has nearly doubled from about 5,000 to more than 9,000. This great expansion in Soviet strategic forces has been possible for the most part with SALT. (The agreements limited launchers, and only indirectly affected deployed weapons.) As noted, however, the Soviet Union has also violated the arms control limitations imposed by these agreements.

The Soviet Union now has about 10,000 strategic nuclear weapons (missile warheads and bombs). The SALT I and II Treaties, even if fully complied with, would not prevent a very substantial further expansion of Soviet capabilities. Even assuming future Soviet compliance with SALT II -- other than the continuation of current Soviet violations -- deployed Soviet weapons are projected to increase to over 12,000 in the next five years. Moreover, by further violating the agreements, the Soviets could plausibly add in the same time period a relatively modest increase of even more weapons to their forces.

It is difficult to predict precisely what the Soviets might do absent SALT constraints. They would not necessarily expand their forces significantly beyond the increases discussed above -- which are very large and would appear, in our judgment, more than enough to meet reasonable military requirements. Thus there might well be little appreciable difference, in terms of total weapons, between the forces that the Soviets might deploy with and without SALT constraints. It is reasonable to expect that in

the absence of SALT, the Soviets would not dismantle all their older systems as rapidly as under SALT. Some classes of weapons (e.g., SSBNs) might not be dismantled at all during the next five years without SALT constraints. Given the great extent of the Soviet strategic modernization program, however, many of these older systems would have relatively little impact on the overall threat to US security.

The Soviets have the potential to expand their forces somewhat further, should they decide to do so for either military or political reasons. If a deliberate effort were made by the Soviet Union to expand its strategic forces beyond SALT II levels, they might increase their forces somewhat further, to about 15,000 weapons by 1991.

However, the costs associated with such an expansion of capability, on top of an already very aggressive and expensive modernization program, would be a disincentive against any such Soviet effort.

With or without SALT, the Soviets are in any case likely to modernize their intercontinental nuclear attack forces further by replacing most of their currently deployed land- and sea-based ballistic missiles and heavy bombers by the mid-1990's. This impressive Soviet modernization program, which will result in significantly improved survivability, flexibility, and hard-target capability, has been in train for a long time.

Projected US Forces

The US could achieve roughly 14,000 weapons by FY 1991 in a no-SALT environment by introducing the full Strategic Modernization Program without undertaking the dismantlements that would otherwise be required by SALT.

## IV -- SOVIET POLITICAL AND NEGOTIATING RESPONSES

It is difficult to predict specific moves the Soviets might decide to take politically or in the negotiations to try to increase criticism of, and build pressure against, the President's May 27 decision. They have already leveled a propaganda campaign against the decision. Ironically, in light of ongoing Soviet violations of SALT II, including violation of the Strategic Nuclear Delivery Vehicles numerical limit, they have warned that they will go beyond the SALT limits if the US does. While they have stated that they would take the "necessary practical" steps, e.g., increasing missiles and warheads, it is not at all clear that they would further expand their forces beyond the increases already planned, as discussed above. However, they are likely to portray any expansion, including that already planned, as a response to US actions.

The Soviets may decide to make political or negotiating moves as a matter of tactics that seek to discredit the US decision.

However, the May 27 decision is not likely permanently to alter their basic, overall objectives for negotiations, or for a summit. These objectives include increasing opposition to the US modernization program, particularly the Strategic Defense Initiative, and weakening the Western Alliance.

We hope that the Soviet Union will join us in a framework of truly mutual restraint. For its part, the United States will continue to exercise utmost restraint in the future seeking to meet US strategic needs, given the Soviet continuing buildup, by means that minimize incentives for continuing Soviet offensive force growth. As we modernize, we will continue to retire older forces as our national security requirements permit. Assuming no significant change in the threat we face as we implement the Strategic Modernization Program, the United States will not deploy more strategic nuclear delivery vehicles or more strategic ballistic missile warheads than does the Soviet Union.

No policy of interim restraint is a substitute for an agreement on deep and equitable reductions in offensive nuclear arms, provided that we can be confident of Soviet compliance with it. We hope the Soviet Union will act to give substance to the agreement reached by the President and General Secretary Gorbachev at the summit meeting last November to achieve early progress in the Geneva negotiations.

Our objectives in Geneva remain the same as stated at the summit: to seek common ground in negotiating deep, equitable, and verifiable reductions in strategic and intermediate-range offensive nuclear arsenals and to discuss with the Soviet Union how we could enhance deterrence and stability by moving toward a world in which we would no longer rely exclusively on the threat of nuclear retaliation to preserve the peace. We hope the Soviets will negotiate seriously with us toward these important goals.

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